



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
3000 MARINE CORPS PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20350-3000

IN REPLY REFER TO:

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DIVPA
25 Aug 09

Letters to the Editor
Honolulu Advertiser
P.O. Box 3110
Honolulu, HI 96802

Dear Editor,

William Cole's commentary "Casualty Info Varies Widely" (Aug. 23) quoted a Marine spokesman from this office, however the comment was taken out of context. Operational security is the driving force behind withholding specific details in Marine Corps casualty releases. Giving our enemies a detailed "score sheet" is not something we would ever want to provide.

We must balance our concern for the families when offering information to the public. There is nothing prohibiting a reporter from asking the operational command questions about how a Marine was killed.

If a journalist wants to show the sacrifices of our men and women, they should report on them as they safeguard Baghdad streets, protect Afghan people, or when a brave few return in flag-draped cases, with the same frequency.

The Marine Corps will continue to respectfully balance operational security, the public's right to know, and concern for family members following the death of each Marine.

Sincerely,

Media Branch Head
Division of Public Affairs